

April 23, 2009 Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman André Carson issued the following statement after the House passed H.R. 1139, the COPS Improvement Act. This legislation allocates an additional \$2 billion to police departments around the country, allowing them to hire 50,000 more officers and procure the modern equipment necessary to better combat crime.

“As a former police officer, I understand well the detrimental impact that funding shortfalls can have on law enforcement efforts. Amid our nationwide economic downturn, these shortfalls have become especially pressing as state and local governments struggle to keep officers on the streets. Fortunately, through awards from the COPS Grant program, many of these departments have been able to hire new officers and bring about significant reductions in local crime rates.

“Today, I was pleased to vote for the COPS Improvement Act, which will expand the COPS Grant program and better enable police departments to afford the resources they need to combat crime and keep our neighborhoods safe. This vital legislation will enable local police departments to focus more on locking up criminals and less on balancing their budgets.

“The recent and tragic killings of police officers in Oakland, California and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania serve as overt reminders of the many hazards local law enforcement officers encounter in their gallant pursuits to protect and serve our communities. By passing this vital legislation, the U.S. House of Representatives is re-affirming its commitment to our nation’s police departments by ensuring that they have the tools they need to prevent, deter and fight crime.”

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